

October 27, 2009

**Public Hearing:** Sign Ordinance Variance V09-0007  
**Owner(s):** Tenet Frisco, Ltd.

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**DESCRIPTION:**

A request for a variance to the Sign Ordinance for additional height and square footage for a monument sign than permitted by Ordinance, described as Tenet Hospital Addition, Block A, Lot 1, also described as 12505 Lebanon Road. Zoned Highway. Neighborhood #28. SI

**REMARKS:**

The City's Sign Ordinance allows for the creation of a Unified Development Zone for properties that are depicted on the same preliminary site plan or final site plan. With the creation of the Zone, a Sign Coordination Plan is prepared that identifies the locations and sizes of the various freestanding signs that will be placed on the site. The approval of a Sign Coordination Plan allows for larger than typical monument signs so as to be able to identify all of the different tenants or services offered on a site. Unified Development Monument Signs have a maximum height of 16 feet and a maximum square footage of 165 square feet. Centennial Medical Center has an approved Sign Coordination Plan.

The owner, Centennial Medical Center, is requesting a twofold variance. The first part of the request is to exceed the maximum sign height for a proposed unified development monument sign. The proposed height of the sign is 18 feet 4 inches which exceeds the maximum height by 2 feet 4 inches.

The second part of the variance request is to increase the square footage of the sign to 180 square feet or 12 square feet over the maximum allowed by the Ordinance. Attached are the applicant's responses to the four criteria for consideration of a variance request.

The Sign Ordinance states the Planning & Zoning Commission shall determine that a request meets three of the following four criteria in order to approve a variance request. The four criteria are as follows with staff's comments on each of the criteria.

1. The proposed sign shall not adversely impact the adjacent property (visibility, size, etc.).

Staff agrees that the proposed sign will not have an adverse impact upon adjacent properties.

2. The proposed sign will be of a unique design or configuration.

The proposed monument sign is very similar to the signs found at various shopping and office centers throughout the City. Some examples of shopping centers include:

- The northeast and southeast corners of Preston Road and Lebanon Road
- A mixed use center on the northeast corner of Warren Parkway and Legacy Drive and;
- The northwest corner of Lebanon Road and Legacy Drive.

These signs clearly identify the tenants of the centers and are visible from adjacent streets. The signs for these shopping centers met the requirements of the Sign Ordinance and did not require variances. In staff's opinion, the sign is not of unique design or configuration.

3. The special exception is needed due to restricted area, shape, the topography, or physical features that are unique to the property on which the proposed sign would be erected.

For a driver coming down the frontage road, the sign location is not visible until they have passed the larger Centennial Medical Center sign on the northwest corner of the frontage road and Coit Road. At that point, a driver would have over six hundred feet of clear visibility in which to identify the sign. The proposed location for the sign is also clearly visible from the Sam Rayburn Tollway. In staff's opinion there are no site restrictions due to area, shape, topography or other physical features.

4. The special exception will substantially improve the public convenience and welfare and does not violate the intent of this ordinance.

The applicant's explanation does not indicate how the additional height and square footage will substantially improve the public convenience and welfare. While the intended content of the sign is important, we are reviewing this from a content neutral standpoint and regulating time, place, and manner. From this viewpoint, the proposed location is good from a visibility stand point and will not be a distraction to traffic. With the exception of the height and square footage the sign will be in compliance with the Sign Ordinance.

In staff's opinion, there is no substantial benefit to the community by increasing the height and square footage and that the proposed monument sign does violate the intent of the Sign Ordinance.

It is staff's opinion, that the request does not meet three of the four criteria specified by the Ordinance.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends denial of the variance request.